

# **MINUTES OF THE HIGHER EDUCATION APPROPRIATION SUBCOMMITTEE**

**Friday, October 1, 2004 at 9:00 a.m.**

**Snow College/Richfield Campus**

## **Unapproved Minutes**

Members Present:	Rep. Bradley T. Johnson, Co-chair Sen. Ron Allen Sen. Peter Knudson Rep. Kory Holdaway Rep. Gregory H. Hughes Rep. Susan Lawrence
Members Excused:	Sen. David Gladwell, Co-chair Sen. Bill Hickman Rep. Katherine M. Bryson Rep. Margaret Dayton Rep. Brad Dee Rep. Patricia W. Jones Rep. LaWanna "Lou" Shurtliff Rep. Stephen H. Urquhart
Staff Present:	Boyd Garriott, Sr. Analyst Debra Headden, Analyst Lynette Erickson, Secretary
Discussion Participants:	Bill Gibson, Director of the Utah Division Services for Blind Commissioner Richard E. Kendell David Buhler, Commissioner's Office Mark Spencer, Commissioner's Office Lucille Stoddard, Commissioner's Office Trent Kemp, Student Regent Nolan Karras, Chairman, Board of Regents Maria Sweeten, Board of Regents William Sederburg, President, Utah Valley State College Steven Bennion, President, Southern Utah University Ryan Thomas, President, College of Eastern Utah Greg Fitch, President, UCAT Judd Morgan, Interim President, Salt Lake Community College Dave Pershing, Senior VP, University of Utah Norm Tarbox, Weber State University Stan Albrecht, Utah State University Mike Petersen, UEN Frank Lojka, Dixie State College

Michael Benson, President, Snow College  
Rep. Brad Winn, Snow College  
Rick White, Snow College, Richfield Campus

A list of visitors and a copy of handouts are filed with the committee minutes.

## **1. Breakfast**

## **2. Introductions**

Co-Chair Bradley Johnson called the meeting to order at 9:10 a.m. He thanked all for coming to what he feels is the best part of state and thanked Pres. Michael Benson and all those involved in planning this meeting. Pres. Michael Benson introduced those who have helped and those around the table introduced themselves.

## **3. Services for the blind**

Bill Gibson, Director of the Utah Division of Services for the Blind and Visually Impaired started off his presentation by saying that the mission of their office is to help blind and visually impaired individuals reach their maximum level of independence and help them gain employment. There are currently about 85 students that attend college through rehabilitation programs they administer. He discussed problems blind students encounter on college campuses including inconsistency, lack of materials, and incorrect information in transcribed braille materials. He said their advisory council has suggested a task force be formed to address these problems along with the feasibility of obtaining a motor pool of equipment that would travel between college campuses.

Pres. Ryan Thomas, President, CEU, offered to initiate the task force process. Co-chair Johnson said Rep. Buxton had agreed to chair a task force.

**MOTION:** Rep. Holdaway moved that the committee recommend a task force be formed as discussed with the intention that it include individuals from each institution of higher education as well as one or two legislators and representatives from the colleges' DRCs and a representative from the State Division of Services for the Blind. After approval for the task force is given by the chairs of the Higher Education Appropriations Subcommittee, the Board of Regents will suggest a roster of members. The motion passed unanimously with all members in attendance voting in favor.

## **4. Progress report on House Bill 320, "Transferability of Credits Among Higher Education Institutions"**

Commissioner Kendall reported there has been a lot of work done on this issue but they still have a lot to do. They are focusing mainly on general education credits and are creating common numbering among institutions. Lucille Stoddard from the Commissioner's office continued that it has been an enormous task to get 250 faculty members together and get them to agree. They have looked at thousands of sections that affect thousands of students. There will always be some problems with the large diversity of programs between institutions and when students change their educational pursuits. Commissioner Kendall reaffirmed that those specific situations brought to their attention with documentation have been resolved amicably.

Rep. Lawrence expressed excitement about this, but said she had talked with a teacher from the U who expressed concern about students whose classes transferred, but they didn't have the knowledge and preparation needed for the more advanced classes.

Sen. Allen said as a teacher he has found the syllabi available on the internet from other universities extremely helpful so he can compare what they are teaching with what is being taught by other colleges and institutions. Trent Kemp, student regent, suggested the same course numbers should expect the same equivalency of knowledge. He supports syllabi being made available on the internet, maybe it should be a regulation. Commissioner Kendall suggested possibly having a link on the commission's website for comparability of course syllabi. Pres. Sederburg cautioned that some faculty argues they own their syllabi and will not publish it. Having advisors at all levels in colleges and high schools who are knowledgeable and readily available to advise students and give them support is also critical. Co-chair Johnson concluded the discussion by saying that this course information should be required and available statewide.

## **5. Performance and Accountability Measures**

Co-chair Johnson referred to the last paragraph in the booklet that the "intended outcome for this meeting is to identify appropriate measures based on defined objectives." Mr. Boyd Garriott shared that the purpose of this discussion was to look at how higher education can help meet objectives of the state. The Legislature is looking more at accountability and measures where institutions prove they are doing the job and using resources prudently. The Legislature looks at issues and how we can resolve the problems along with how we are preparing students to work and attract businesses to Utah. Higher education is the economic engine of the state and we want our students to stay and serve in our communities. He went over the recommendations in the booklet and drew attention to the "Measuring up" report and the report from the Board of Regents.

Mr. Nolan Karras, Chair, Board of Regents said he believes the place to start in this enormous and complex task is to establish a set of principles and have institutional councils look at them and present their opinions in a report. He said he believes the mission is threefold, to (1) help students are successful, (2) empower institutional councils and (3) assist the Legislature and Governor

Commissioner Kendell indicated they are working on a report that would present the progress being made toward outlined goals. In this attempt they are looking at four important issues in the state, access, quality, efficiency of finance and performance measures. ACT scores and concurrent enrollment are measures of how we are addressing quality. Pass rates are measures of quality. An example of efficiency and finance is the increasing number of engineering degrees awarded. A WICHE report shows Utah is the highest performing state in higher education. These are some merits that can be used.

Rep. Lawrence, questioned if studies have been completed showing what the increases mean and if we have measured enough to know the how and why of the increases in engineering. Commissioner Kendell responded saying we know most of the engineering graduates are staying in state and nationally engineering student numbers are down. Steve Bennion, President, SUU, commented that engineering is down overall in America and the economy is not good if engineering is down. He feels it goes back to K-12 and preparing and encouraging students to pursue engineering. Rep. Lawrence asked if there is space for more engineering students since the U program is very competitive and hard to get into. It seems contradictory if we need more students, but they cannot get into programs. Commissioner Kendell responded that engineering money has gone to increase space and it is an impressive investment.

Dave Pershing, Senior VP, University of Utah reported that two-thirds of their engineering graduates are staying in Utah and they wouldn't have had the growth they have had if the initiative had not passed. He said they can handle most of the demand and USU is in the process of building a new building which will increase their capacity for more students. He also stated that the starting salary for these graduating students was more than \$60,000

Sen. Knudson looked back at the original purposes of the engineering initiative when the Governor presented it and the Legislature's buy was that by training engineers, businesses would be attracted to the state and rural communities would benefit. He asked if there had been an evaluation of the impact and if the purposes of the initiative had been met. Pres. Bennion responded that there were 702 new jobs in rural Utah in last four years and Stan Albrecht commented that the impact has been enormous and is exciting. Rep. Brad Winn commented that engineering graduates have increased 23%.

Sen. Allen suggested we may need to rethink accountability to a desired outcome and the outcome may come later. We need to not just measure accountability but also outcomes. The group discussed what information, data and measurements are available that show results and the return on investment and how all groups involved benefit. Pres. Ryan Thomas, CEU, said there is a lot of data out there that we don't have access to and right now we have to rely on secondary data. He suggested that any time researchers get above 20% return, it is good and he advised they look at current data and make it available. Rep. Holdaway suggested also looking at how and what other states are doing compared to Utah.

Pres. Sederburg stressed that the biggest indicator is the number of graduates and while Utah is high in

the number of high school graduates, we drop to average in the number of college graduates. Sen. Allen commented that it is difficult to measure the quality of life our graduates experience and reminded that some degrees get jobs, but other classes improve life. Rep. Lawrence said we need to figure out why our number of high school graduates exceed the national average, while our college graduates are lower. That needs to be looked at since that is our goal and determine why students are not continuing their higher education. Pres. Sederburg stated we are losing approximately 50-55% of students after their second year and we need to zero in on that. Pres. Bennion said two to three years ago in a task force, the presidents talked about student retention, knowing that students don't succeed unless they get through. He reported their retention is up 12% over the last two or three years.

Mr. Karras asked if this project should be undertaken jointly or have the regents continue to plow along. He continued that as far as expectations, we all want the same thing, we want to make sure what we measure gives us what we want. He could be persuaded to do it incrementally, but would love to have an agreement on the principles. He also suggested putting a draft together of principles, then let people bring those forward to sort through data. Co-Chair Johnson suggested that since this is such an important issue in which legislators are really interested, some of the committee members would want to be involved.

Greg Fitch, President, UCAT, commented that about 21% of jobs require four year degrees. He also stated that we need to make sure there is a place for students when they graduate by looking at salaries and how they compare to other jobs not requiring a 4-year degree.

Mr. Garriott asked about possible funding rewards for measured outcomes. Rep. Holdaway suggested developing concept performance measures with funding attached and warned against pitting one group against another when all need to work together.

Pres. Sederburg questioned accountability to whom? He said it is gets confusing with membership changes on the committee and on the Board of Regents. He said to hold universities accountable is like saying hold the city of Richfield accountable. What they are really doing is holding those under them accountable. "To Whom" is often overlooked. Co-Chair Johnson submitted "to whom" are the people of Utah, those paying taxes.

Mr. Karras concluded that we've started the seed and Commissioner Kendell and his staff are very capable and can proceed. He said that in his estimation this type of discussion is more helpful than the appropriation's meetings to which Rep. Lawrence responded that the committee spends so much time at the beginning of sessions rehashing the same information. There isn't enough time for everything, and she would like to get into meat at the beginning of session. Rep. Hughes said he would like to see this group meet again before the session since he finds legislative meetings rigid and restrictive to this type of a group discussion.

Sen. Knudson commented he believes that most people think all higher education funding comes from taxpayers dollars and he would like to see a breakdown of what taxpayers are paying and what students are paying.

Summaries of performance measures prepared by each college and university were distributed and are included in the packet. Co-Chair Johnson discussed with the group whether they would like to continue with a working lunch or have another meeting. Rep. Lawrence suggested since many of the committee members were not in attendance, there needed to be at least one more meeting prior to the session. Mr. Karras invited others to join them in their scheduled Board of Regents meeting on December 9<sup>th</sup>. Co-chair Johnson suggested continuing with a working lunch in order to discuss the other items on agenda.

The meeting recessed at 12:00 noon for lunch and returned at 12:20 p.m. Brad Winn introduced the chef who was thanked for the delicious lunch.

## **6. Tuition and Fees**

Debbie Headden presented information under Tab 4, Escalation of Tuition and Fees for Undergraduate Students. She said there is a lot of concern, across the nation as well as in Utah, about tuition increases for resident students. Resident student tuition and fees have increased 42% since 2000. There is also concern that student debt now averages \$14,000 after five years and continues to escalate. State comparison tables in Appendix A show that our research universities' tuition and fees are well below the national and WICHE averages and are still a very good deal. However, our community colleges, is just average with UVSC raking higher and SLCC average compared to the WICHE states. The Board of Regents has the authority to set rates and more and more of the share are being placed on the student. Since 2001 fees have increased by institution from 2.6% at SUU to 24.8% at SLCC.

The group discussed fees. Should all students pay the same, how they are used, and who has say? Trent Kemp said students feel the legislature and regents should not be involved at all in student fees that they should solely be between students and institutions. He believes student officers should have a say with the president how fees should be used and run. He gave an example of their sponsoring a voter registration booth as an example of how fees are used and suggested there is a lot more to learn besides just in the classroom.

Sen. Allen, said a recent survey showed people are willing to pay whatever it takes to get kids through school. Maria Sweeten agreed that the market is paying and programs can't be added fast enough. Trent Kemp also agreed that students will pay for a quality education, but we need to make sure kids that can't afford to attend a university can afford community colleges. Co-Chair Johnson said he has found that student leaders are in favor of increased tuition, but other students are not.

Pres. Judd Morgan, SLCC, said there is a parallel between state funding diminishing and students paying more. As part of their accreditation process they recently looked at tuition and fees and heard of students saving paying for tuition but then finding they can't pay for books, so they drop out. On the other hand they cannot have a student center without fees and as state funds diminish, costs are put on the backs of students. He distributed a graph showing that SLCC is at 172% of cost average in WICHE states, and 136% of cost average in the Rocky Mountain Maximum. This is upside down, SLCC needs to be the lowest and other institutions higher, one size does not fit all. While their head count is up 4%, they are finding that students are coming, taking classes, but not as many as they have in past and that is a concern. Trent Kemp said these percentages indicated what should be opposite and feels this destroys the mission of community colleges. Students should pay more for upper level classes. He personally advises that all students go to community college first.

Commissioner Kendell commented that state funding and other funding used to be students paid 25%, state 75%. The goal now to preserve access and quality at 1/3 - 2/3, but the last few years the state has not been able to pay its 2/3 share.

#### **7. Funding of enrollment growth, fuel and power, and operation and maintenance of new facilities with limited state resources**

Mr. Garriott opened this discussion saying this is where the rubber meets the road. This is what the regents and then the appropriation committee is going to have to wrestle with over the next sixty days. The question is what do we do about 10,000 unfunded students on campuses with power costs escalating. It is easier to build a building than pay for operating costs. Last year money wasn't provided for the costs of running new buildings.

Mr. Karras said these are the hardest decisions. When you fund growth, so much per student, presidents still have to pay for heat and lights first and may have to use growth money to do so. He suggested what is really being said here is what are we really going to spend designated growth money for. Commissioner Kendell added that with fuel and power costs are up, bills have to get paid by scraping money from everywhere else in institution. "Maybe growth cannot continue if there is no funding. We're going to have to take things off our plate because we can't do it all." Co-chair Johnson said that is the proper approach as we are all in this together and the more accurate and up-front we are the better. Pres. Thomas pointed out they have taken extreme measures to reduce fuel and power costs including closing buildings for three days a week in summer to allow him to pay the power bill.

Sen. Ron Allen suggested possibly looking at elimination of tax credits as an additional funding sources.

Co-chair Johnson closed the meeting saying a lot more discussion could be given on all of the agenda items and thanked all for coming to Richfield.

**MOTION:** Sen Knudson made a motion to adjourn. The motion was unanimous with all members present voting in favor.

The meeting adjourned at 1:30 p.m.

Minutes recorded by Lynette Erickson.